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LETTER DATED 24 MARCH 1998 FROM THE PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE OF TAJIKISTAN TO THE UNITED NATIONS ADDRESSED TO THE SECRETARY-GENERAL

On the instructions of my Government I have the honour to transmit herewith the text of a statement issued by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Tajikistan on 24 March 1998 (see annex).

I should be very grateful if you would have the text of the present letter and its annex circulated as a document of the Security Council.

(Signed) R. ALIMOV
Ambassador,
Permanent Representative of the
Republic of Tajikistan to the
United Nations

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Annex

[Original: Russian]

Statement dated 24 March 1998 by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Tajikistan

Provocative actions by individual armed groups of the United Tajik Opposition have become more frequent recently in the Republic of Tajikistan, and the Government of the Republic Tajikistan has repeatedly pointed this out to the Opposition's leadership.

The citizens of Tajikistan are seriously concerned by the fact that during the period from January through March 1998 in various towns and districts of the country, armed Opposition units led by individual field commanders have been blatantly violating the peace agreements reached and are in fact continuing to carry out acts of military confrontation.

The failure of the Opposition's leadership to take decisive measures to halt acts of murder, robbery, banditry, sabotage, the taking of hostages and other terrorist acts directed against the servicemen of Governmental forces and members of the internal forces as well as peaceful inhabitants of the Republic by individual armed units of the Opposition is jeopardizing the peace process in Tajikistan, defeating the efforts by all the wholesome forces of society to bring about national accord, trust and mutual understanding by the parties. The passive and evasive position of the leaders of the United Tajik Opposition in this matter has resulted in further victims and given rise to an unhealthy situation in the Republic.

Accordingly, on 24 March 1998, at approximately 9 a.m., a group of fighters from the United Tajik Opposition under the command of Field Commander Namozov carried out an armed attack against a militia post in the Kafirnigan district, which resulted in the death of six persons - five militia members and one peaceful inhabitant. An additional 30 persons, including civilians, sustained wounds of varying degrees of severity.

The President of the Republic of Tajikistan has repeatedly called upon the leaders of the United Tajik Opposition and the Commission on National Reconciliation to halt the illegal actions by individual armed units of the Opposition, but, unfortunately, they have not taken effective measures.

The Government of the Republic of Tajikistan, taking into consideration the continuing terrorist acts, the killing of citizens, the taking of hostages and the blackmail to which residents of the districts where there are armed Opposition units are subjected, states that it has the right to take the most decisive measures against armed groups that aim to destabilize the social and political situation in individual regions of the Republic.

The Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Tajikistan appeals to the Secretary-General of the United Nations, the United Nations Mission of Observers in Tajikistan (UNMOT) and the Guarantor States of the General Agreement on the Establishment of Peace and National Accord in Tajikistan to assess correctly the actions by the armed units of the United Tajik Opposition in order to ensure that they comply with that Agreement and take the corresponding measures in that regard.